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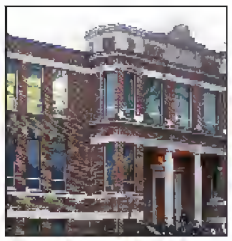
The Fort Erie Times

Saturday, March 31, 2012



High school staying

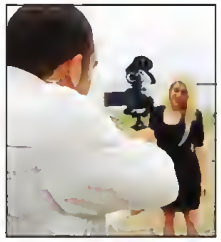
RCBHS not part of review's first phase

04

Backpack safety

Partnership between FESS and Region

09



• Local couple gets creative

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Rallying for an industry

SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

Last Monday, about a thousand people from across Ontario who work in the horse racing industry travelled to Queen's Park with the hope that the decision to close the Slots-at-the-racetrack program could be overturned. More than 100 people from Fort Erie attended the rally in an effort to keep theFort Erie Racetrack open after the 2012 season.

Sarah Ferguson
The Times

About 1,000 protesters rallied in Queen's Park with a message for politicians on the hill on Monday morning—to save their horses and to save their jobs.

More than 100 residents from Fort Erie filled four buses and countless cars and they headed to the horsemen's rally in Toronto to protest the recent announcement to end the slots-at-the-racetrack program.

Wendy Wolff, a horse trainer from Sherkston, was one of small group of people who helped organize transportation to the rally in a short five-day period.

The horse trainer, who owns her own farm, has been involved with horses her entire life and when she heard the news that the slots facilities in town would be closing, Wolff was concerned.

"We literally went door-to-door and barn-to-barn for support," Wolff said, adding, "So many of us who work in the industry were frustrated and we had to do something."

The decision to close the slots in Fort Erie and the end of the slots-at-racetrack program will hurt everyone from retailers, to restaurants and other local businesses, not just the people in the horse racing industry, said Wolff.

See Page 3

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For more information feel free to contact:
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Good Friday Service
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Easter Sunday Service
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SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

A group of residents gathered at the Slots at Fort Erie Racetrack early Monday morning and boarded one of four buses shortly after 8 a.m. They travelled to Queen's Park to participate in a rally organized by horsemen across the province.

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Protestors, both young and old, questioned whether or not horse racing would have a future, after the province has announced its plans to cut funding to the industry.

Horse racing is vital to the community, says resident

From page 1

The decision to close the slots in Fort Erie and the end of the slots-at-racetrack program will hurt everyone from retailers, to restaurants and other local businesses, not just the people in the horse racing industry, said Wolff.

"People think this will have a ripple affect on the community, but it won't. It's a tsunami and horse breeders will not recover this year."

Laurie Langley also attended the rally in Toronto. She is a second-generation horse trainer born and raised in Fort Erie.

With more than 30 years of experience under her belt as a horse trainer, Langley said she was happy to protest to get the message to politicians that the horse racing industry is a vital part of Ontario.

If the racetrack in Fort Erie were to close, Langley said she didn't know what she would do to make a living.

"It's a part of my family. We've all been in the business working together for decades."

> **"It's a part of my family. We've been in the business working together for decades"**
>
> *— Laurie Langley*

Although the future of the racetrack is uncertain after 2012, Langley keeps on working and preparing for the upcoming season.

"All we can do is try to stay positive."

People working in the horse racing industry don't take sick days, they don't have holidays and they work 365 days a year, but they do it because they are passionate about what they do, Mike Bennett said.

Bennett, who has been in the business for many years, working as a horse trainer, says the people who work in the industry are a lot like a family and that's why it is important that it is protected.

"Horse racing is a lifestyle."

Although John Maurice has never worked in the horse racing industry, he says he felt it was important that he come to Toronto to show support for the community.

Maurice said many people won't fully realize the impact the racetrack has on the town because businesses will suffer and taxes will most likely increase for residents.

"I'm a full supporter of the more than 200 people losing their jobs in Fort Erie. We need to stand and support these people because their loss affects the whole town."

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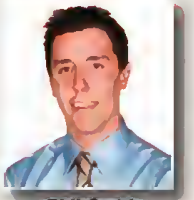
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SARAH FERGUSON Newspaper

Mayor Doug Martin attended the the Horsemen's Rally at Queen's Park on Monday and he addressed the crowd of protestors, saying the cutting of funds to racetracks will have a negative impact on many communities.

Martin calls slots closure an 'ill-conceived decision'

Sarah Ferguson
The Times

Mayor Doug Martin with councillors Rick Shular and Stephen Passero were among more than 100 other Fort Erie residents who rallied at Queen's Park in Toronto on Monday morning.

The rally was a protest against the recent announcement that the provincial government is re-evaluating the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation's structure, closing racetrack-at-slots facilities.

The province has also outlined plans to discontinue a $345 million "subsidy" to the Ontario horse racing industry.

About a 1,000 trainers, groomers, riders and racetrack employees from across Ontario also attended.

When Martin heard about the rally on Friday afternoon, he knew he had to attend to support the community.

"I'm here to let the government know this was an ill conceived decision to close the Slots at the Fort Erie Racetrack and it isn't going to work."

The decision to close the slots will have a negative impact on not just the Fort Erie community, but rural communities across Ontario as well, Martin said.

"I'm here to make the politicians acknowledge all of the hits that have been inflicted on our dear community. Hopefully it's not too late to make a change."

Martin said he wasn't sure if the rally would change the decision to close the slots facilities in town, but "it couldn't hurt to try."

Martin said he has asked to meet with Premier Dalton McGuinty and Finance Minister Dwight Duncan with the hope that Fort Erie's racetrack could be saved.

Shular said he felt privileged to be standing at Queen's Park in support of the horse racing industry and he hoped the rally would create an awareness about how many jobs will be lost across Ontario.

"I'm hoping there will be some recognition for the people of the horse racing industry. People are concerned and rightly so. More than 200 lost jobs is significant but losing 600,000 jobs in Ontario is catastrophic."

The councillor said he appreciated the challenges legislation has to deal with when making decisions, but making the decision to pull funding from racetracks in Fort Erie, Sarnia and Windsor is devastating.

"There has to be another type of revenue we haven't explored."

Passero said he felt he had to attend the rally to show support for the community because of the significant affect the horse racing industry has on the community.

"With the significant job loss to our community, it's the least I could do to take a couple hours out of my day to show support."

The councillor says it is important that the town stands together to rally support and find a way to save the racetrack in town because many people depend on it for their livelihood.

By gathering at Queen's Park, Passero said politicians on the hill would take notice.

"I'm a firm believer that actions speaker louder than words."

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Province directing closure of Ontario Welcome Centre

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

Mayor Doug Martin didn't mince any words when discussing what appears to be another business closure in Fort Erie.

During Tuesday's provincial budget deliberations, finance minister Dwight Duncan said another measure that will be taken to allevaite Ontario's deficit will be closing seven different welcome centres in Ontario.

The one in Fort Erie, just off the Queen Elizabeth Way is part of that plan.

"I figured we were on that list and of course we were," said Martin shortly after he became aware of the news.

> **"On Monday I'll be making a motion to hand premier McGuinty the key to the town and tell him to lock up and turn the lights off before we leave."**
>
> *— Mayor Doug Martin*

The Town of Fort Erie and its local officials have not been given formal notice about the matter, but Martin expects the wheels are already in motion.

"They'll probably notify us two or three weeks down the line," he said on Wednesday evening.

This comes two weeks after the provincial government announced it would be closing the Fort Erie Racetrack Slots and also laid out its plans to discontinue any funding to the horse racing industry in Ontario.

"On Monday I'll be making a motion to hand premier McGuinty the key to the town and tell him to lock up and turn off the lights before we leave," said Martin, sarcastically.

The slots closure and likely this news are the result of less U.S. residents coming to Canada to enjoy what it has to offer, which in Martin's opinion is something the provincial government can be partially blamed for.

"They've done nothing to promote Ontario to our U. S. neighbours," said Martin.

Niagara Falls member of provincial parliament Kim Craitor explained that the welcome centre is owned by the same person that owns the Fort Erie Racetrack, but the property is rented by the Ontario government.

There is one person who works at the facility, which Craitor feels is a safety issue.

"I always had a concern with one person alone in this building."

He said any time a facility or business is closed, it is never seen as a favourable decision within the community, but in this case he feels it is for the best.... considering the building is under-utilized and only employs one individual.

"It's hard for me to say it's the wrong thing to do," said Craitor.

But he does believe that a travel centre in Fort Erie is needed and said he will be making a proposal for the government to reconsider a new location in the near future.

"I have an idea of where the right place should be."

See Page 8

Craitor meets with premier to pitch privatization

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

Niagara Falls member of provincial parliament Kim Craitor has met with premier Dalton McGuinty to further express Fort Erie's interest to take over the Racetrack and Slots.

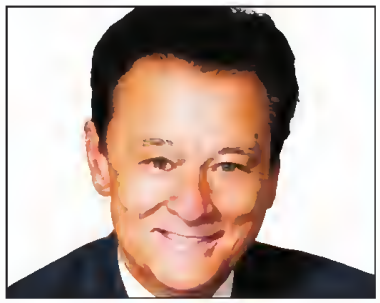
Craitor met with the provincial leader on Wednesday and shared with him a letter authored by Jim Thibert, chief executive officer of the Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium (FELRC) and general manager of the Fort Erie Economic Development and Tourism Corporation.

> **"They need to have a meaningful dialogue to see if that's possible."**
>
> *— Kim Craitor*

McGuinty had already had the letter delivered to him, but Craitor wanted to meet with him to share his thoughts on the proposal that lies within it and to express why he feels it is a viable option.

"I promised I would do that and I did," said Craitor.

In the letter, Thibert requests the provincial government's consideration to allow the FELRC to operate the slots as a privately managed facility.



Kim Craitor

Craitor hopes his meeting with the premier on Wednesday will result in the FELRC getting some face time with the government.

"They need to have a meaningful dialogue to see if that's possible," said Craitor.

Fort Erie's representative for the province also feels a meeting will be granted and expects by then the FELRC will have a five-year business plan in place to explain to the premier.

Craitor said over the last three years that the non-profit group has operated the Racetrack, it is his opinion that they have the skill and knowledge to undertake both the slots and the racetrack as a private entity.

"I believe they have those abilities," said Craitor.

See Page 8

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opinion page

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our editorial

Horsemen are passionate about what they do

If there is one thing anyone can agree on, it's that the people who work in the horse racing industry—groomers, jockeys, trainers—they are a passionate group of people.

The people who work in this industry will tell anyone who asks that working with horses is a 24/7 job, working 365 days a year.

Many of these people don't have paid holidays, they don't take vacations and yet they keep doing it because it is something they love.

For these horsemen, the job is worthwhile—all they want is to keep working.

This past Monday, the Fort Erie Times had the opportunity to travel with many of these passionate people.

On Monday morning, shortly after 8 a.m. two buses filled with people who work at the racetrack in Fort Erie left the parking lot of the Slots at Fort Erie Racetrack, bringing with them their frustration and signs to show Premier Dalton McGuinty exactly how they felt.

When the buses arrived at Queen's Park in Toronto, there was already a growing crowd of other horsemen. Many of them had come from across Ontario for the very same reason.

It was hard to estimate an exact number of people who attended, but it was most likely close to a 1,000 people.

For about three hours, these people who work in the industry yelled loud and clear that they did not want to see it end.

Politicians were sure to have heard chants and yells of "save out horses, save our jobs," while they debated Ontario's budget for 2012.

What was was most striking was the fact that both very young and older adults attended.

The people who chose to work in horse racing not only do it out of passion, but they continue to work because it becomes a family business.

Many of the people who were rallying have been working in their barns with their grandparents, and their parents since they were five years old.

If the horse industry folds after next year, more than just jobs will be lost in Fort Erie.

For some people, their way of life will be lost too.

Do You Remember?

Thank you to Mary Jo (Rehm) Stolk and Heather Kidd for identifying last week's photo of a presentation for the first Stevensville Brownies.

The girl on the left is Penny Phibbs and the girl on the right is Jennifer Woehl.

Girl Guide District Commissioner Heather Kidd (left) is awarding leader Dorothy Rehm with her 15 year service pin.

Dorothy was Mary Jo's aunt.

For this week's photo, we do have several names written on the back.

But we would like to know all of the people in the photo.

We would also like to know anything else about why and where this photo was taken.

The names written on the back of this photo are Ernie Maskell, Clarence Clarke and Dora Thompson.

If you can put names to any of these faces in this week's photo, please call the museum at 905-894-5322 or e-mail us at museum@forterie.on.ca.

Questions about 'Fort Dreary' not given proper answers

Dear Editor,

I wonder how many people took part in that so called "Town Hall meeting" the other night.

It was conducted as a kind of conference call and lasted almost an hour.

The idea was that callers were given a chance to speak directly to their senior elected officials and voice their beefs for all to hear.

My chance came after a wait that seemed an eternity.

My question was why didn't the OLG co-incide the closing of the slots with the end of horse racing season?

Guess what? I never did get on the program, my guess is that no one wanted to answer my question.

But I was promised that someone would get back to me soon. I am still waiting.

Most of the callers- in were concerned with things like all-day kindergarten, the budget and health care.

Personally, I think the whole thing was rigged.

Now lets get back to Fort Dreary, thats exactly what we are becoming. Closing the Welcome Centre, also near the Racetrack, and what's next ? There is DMI in Stevensville where at one time a couple of hundred workers were going strong. The lot used to be full of turbine towers, now on an average day you might see a half dozen worker's cars in the lot.

People complain about those turbines being ugly, the same folks complain about solar farms. That's the 'nimby' thing in action.

The Feed In Tariff is way too generous, on that I agree, but given a choice, you bet I would welcome turbines on my farm, and the cash crop that comes with it.

So the province has really shafted us again.

Maybe Queen's Park thinks that we really are a suburb of Buffalo NY.

Kim Craitor, I know you are in a tough spot, but if were I in your position, perhaps easier said than done, I would have bolted the party by now.

Paul Kassay
Crystal Beach

opinion page

Racing Consortium asks premier to consider takeover of track

Dear Editor,

This is a letter directed to Premier Dalton McGuinty.

On behalf of the Fort Erie Racing Consortium (FELRC), I am seeking your immediate support with the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG), to be the first in Ontario under the new gaming industry restructuring plan to operate the Fort Erie slots as a privately managed facility.

The FELRC has been successful over the past two years operating the Fort Erie thoroughbred racetrack.

We have done so as a community-based, non-profit corporation and will run in 2012.

Beyond that date, we require a reliable revenue system over and above what can be generated on track through pari-mutuel wagering.

By operating Fort Erie slots, we believe we can create efficiencies with our on-site operations, suppliers, appeal to both the traditional Fort Erie slots patrons, our own horse racing patrons, attract many of our past Canadian and U.S. patrons and provide a return to the province on that support by way of $1 million annual return on investment-site license fee.

Since January of this year, the FELRC has retained Deloitte Canada, a highly reputable and experienced consulting firm to work with us to develop a new business model for the Fort Erie Racetrack for the years 2013 and beyond.

That business plan was predicated on greater self-sustainability but did rely on horse purses and some operational funds through the OLG Slots at Racetrack revenue sharing program.

So, as the site holder of the Fort Erie Racetrack, as a partner in the revenue-sharing program with the OLG and province, and with the knowledge of our local MPP and Finance Minister Dwight Duncan, we were proceeding on this strategic course when it came as a great shock, having not been consulted, nor made aware that the province would be cancelling the entire Fort Erie Slots' program and, by defacto, the Fort Erie Racetrack.

This would be a devastating blow to the town of Fort Erie as before year-end it would result in 235 layoffs at the slots and a further 300 layoffs at Fort Erie Racetrack as well as the loss of this location to conduct business for more than 1,000 horsemen and serve providers to the horse industry.

With the local unemployment level near 11 per cent and the welfare caseload in excess of 500 families, we are already facing more than 2,000 residents who are unemployed when little more than a year ago we might have been at eight per cent.

Mr. Premier, Fort Erie needs jobs.

It needs businesses, not more layoffs, and certainly none caused solely by the government of Ontario.

We appreciate the economic dilemna the province of Ontario finds itself in, but please understand that the case we make, that we have been trying to make for six years, is that the town of Fort Erie has been unduly and dramatically impacted in a negative way by a number of provincial policies that constrain our ability to create jobs, to create growth and to plan and develop a future for our residents.

For six years, Mr. Premier, we have spoken to ministers, to deputy ministers, senior staff and political staff.

Some we and our colleagues at the Town of Fort Erie have briefed several times and all seemed to be aware and agree that the specific policies are having negative effects on Fort Erie.

However, no amount of commiseration seems able to empower any of those people to operate outside their specific mandate and take the lead in order to address cross jurisdictional problems.

We believe this recent decision and this recent bad news from the OLG to be more of the same... one ministry, one agency making decisions that might be good for itself while piling on more bad news for Fort Erie.

Likely, with no malice intended, but certainly without any knowledgeable consideration for the impact on our community, our residents, and our ability to earn a living.

So, Mr. Premier, we call on you to hear our concerns and to give Fort Erie its chance.

We need you to immediatley take the lead, to shepherd your ministries and agencies to focus their efforts on Fort Erie and to immediately resolve the problems these policies are causing.

Further, and starting immediatley, to support us with the OLG to be able to access and obtain the financials we require to conduct due diligence and more fully explore the potential to create a win-win situtation for the Fort Erie Racerack, the Fort Erie Slots, the Town of Fort Erie and for the province of Ontario.

On behalf of the FELRC and the Town of Fort Erie, we can only hope that your leadership and your support is forthcoming and that together we can create some relief from the dichotomy of results these policies are having on Fort Erie.

In doing so, we are hopeful that we can again be a community on a level playing field in Ontario with respect to attracting quality jobs, successful businesses, and to creating a prosperous future for our selves.

Thank you for this opportunity and I know the council of Fort Erie, employees of the Fort Erie Racetrack and Fort Erie Slots are eagerly awaiting what we hope will be a very positive response.

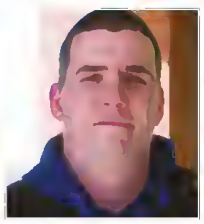
James Thibert
Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium

The TIMES Asks

Do you think Fort Erie's Welcome Centre should be closed?

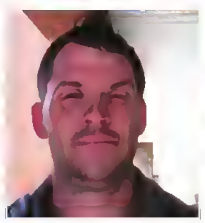
Mike Maurice

"It's a good idea to have one but it needs a better location."



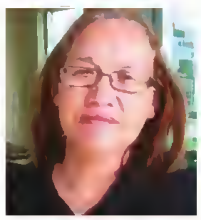
Jean–Pierre Auclair

"I'm not sad to see it go. But, I would hate to see nothing in it."



Nick Auclair

"It was a waste of money to build it in the first place."



Wanita Hill

"It looks empty most of the time and it's certainly not visible to people where it's located."

What do you think?

E–mail: editorial@forterietimes.com or call 905–871–3100, ext. 207

Heather

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'Give Fort Erie its chance,' says Thibert

From Page 5

There is still plenty of uncertainty for timing, as the provincial budget has not yet been approved and a possible election, could be on its way.

"Everything is on the table," he said.

In Thibert's letter, he clearly lays out to premier McGuinty how much of an impact the Fort Erie Racetrack and Slots closing would have on the small community of 30,000 people.

"We call on you to hear our concerns and to give Fort Erie its chance. We need you to take the lead, to shepherd your ministries and agencies to focus their efforts on Fort Erie and to immediately resolve the problems these policies are causing," wrote Thibert.

"Fort Erie needs jobs. It needs business, not more layoffs and certainly none caused solely by the Government of Ontario."

Thibert's full letter can be read on page 7 of this week's issue.

Province adjusting tourism marketing services

Seven welcome centres across province set to close

From Page 5

The 2012 provincial budget unveiled a plan to streamline spending and produce greater efficiencies, says Ronald Holgerson, interim president of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation in a letter to town officials.

"We are realigning our tourism marketing services by focusing on online travel marketing activities to meet consumers' travel research preferences through a major redevelopment of our tourism information website, call centre and brochure distribution service. We are also introducing a tourism presence in the Ministry of Transportation's 23 new, high-traffic highway service centres," he wrote.

Eleven remaining travel information centres across the province in Bainsville, Barrie, Hawkesbury, Niagara Falls, Pigeon River, Sault Ste Marie, St. Catharines, Sarnia, Tilbury, Toronto Atrium on Bay and Windsor Park will remain open.

"Reconfiguring the OTIC network is a necessary step to secure a sustainable future for the government's tourism, culture and sport programs," said Holgerson.

THE TOWN OF FORT ERIE
1 Municipal Centre Drive, Fort Erie, ON, L2A 2S6
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FORT ERIE ONTARIO
Our Focus: Your Future

PUBLIC NOTICE

(1) **The Town of Fort Erie and Canadian Niagara Power Inc. encourage you to participate in**

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Proudly committed to 60 EARTH HOUR

Saturday, March 31, 2012 from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm

Join cities and towns around the globe in sending a powerful national and global message that it's possible to take action on global warming by:

turning off the lights for one hour on Saturday, March 31, 2012

FORT ERIE ONTARIO Our Focus: Your Future

Spread the word about Earth Hour to your neighbours, friends, family members and co-workers. For further information check out www.earthhour.org

CANADIAN NIAGARA POWER CNP

(2) **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BY-LAW NO. 98-09**

TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to Section 12 of the Development Charges Act, 1997, the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie intends to hold a Public Meeting on Monday, April 23, 2012 at 6:00 PM to consider amendments to Development Charges By-law No. 98-09.

The proposed amendments are described in Administrative Report CS-10-12 as the Background Development Charge Study. A copy of the draft amending by-law is included as an appendix to CS-10-12. The Report provides recommendations regarding the recovery of serving costs through development charges.

Administrative Report CS-10-12 is available on the Town's website at www.forterie.on.ca or by contacting the Town of Fort Erie. Further inquiries should be directed to Helen Chamberlain, Director of Financial Services at ext. 2300 (hchamberlain@forterie.on.ca).

Any person interested in appearing before Council as a delegation at its meeting of Monday, April 23, 2012 to address the proposed amendments to Development Charges By-law No. 98-09 must register with the Clerk's Office by calling 905-871-1600 ext. 2236 by 3:00pm Friday, April 20, 2012.

Carolyn J. Kett, Town Clerk
ckett@forterie.on.ca

Dated at Fort Erie, Ontario this 31st day of March 2012.

Carolyn J. Kett, Town Clerk
ckett@forterie.on.ca

Helen Chamberlain, Director of Financial Services
hchamberlain@forterie.on.ca

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Ask the Expert

Got a Question? Ask a Professional!

Ask a Hair Stylist

Q: Do many men get their hair professionally colored?

A: Only the men that want to look as young as they feel. Hair coloring is so advanced now that it doesn't have to look unatural. A few highlights to blend in grey or a full color that fades on tone and lasts up to 4-6 weeks. A quick all over color application processes quickly in 10 minutes to accomodate male guests need for speed.

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Hair Stylists/Owners

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905-871-1236

Ask The Accountant

Q: Do I have to report horse-racing activity on my tax return if I own a race horse?

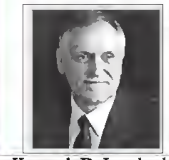
A: More importantly, will we still have live horse racing in Fort Erie, second, to answer your question, yes and no depending on the circumstances. The Income Tax Act considers race-horse maintenance a farming activity. Race-horse activities may fall under one of the following three categories 1. Hobby Farming 2. Restricted Farming 3. Full-time Farming.

Hobby - if the activity is undertaken not in pursuit of profit, but for personal enjoyment the losses would not be deductible.

Restricted Farming - if horse-racing activities are operated in a business like manner, but is not your chief source of income, any losses incurred are limited to the lesser of the actual loss or $2,500 plus one half of the $12,500, to a maximum of $8,750. **TIP** - operate with your spouse as a partner and double up on the allowable losses.

Full-time Farming - if horse-racing is your chief source of income it is treated the same as any other business, subject to normal farming tax rules.

Always consult an accountant experienced in the race-horse industry if considering ownership.



Kenneth D. Lenchyshyn
CGA, ALA, CFE

crawford smith & swallow
Chartered Accountants LLP
76 Jarvis Street,
Fort Erie, Ontario
905-871-2610
ken@crawfordss.com

ASK THE EXPERT

Helen McCreadie

Q: When starting a business what are my government responsibilities?

A: There are several federal, provincial and municipal regulations and requirements when starting a new business. The most common requirements involve: registering your business name, obtaining a municipal business license, adhering to municipal zoning and by-laws to ensure proper land usage, registering for Harmonized Sales Tax (HST), and obtaining a Business Number. If you are considering hiring employees you will need open a Payroll Deductions account, and adhere to the requirements of Employment Standards and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). Depending on your type of business venture you may also be affected by industry related licences and permits.

For more information contact:

BSL
Business Success & Loan Centre Fort Erie
45 Jarvis Street, Fort Erie, ON
905-871-7331 • www.bslft.com

Ask a Restaurateur

Q: With the lay-offs and closure at the Fort Erie Slots at the end of April, how will it effect the restaurant business in town?

A: First and foremost, all the employees at the Slots are mostly local people and they need our full support in these trying times.
The pending void is immense, not only in lost revenue for the hospitality industry but it is considered as a death in the hospitality family in town, as The Fort Erie Race Track has been our main tourist attraction for the past 115 years. The Fort Erie Race Track employees are incredible people that cater to everyone's needs with grace and with an uncanny ability to exemplify our town's good nature.
Unfortunately, the recent announcement for the Slots will cause a domino effect for many more announcements at The Fort Erie Race Track and the surrounding restaurants that service tourists and employees alike, unless a solution is reached soon.
Many business people feel that the announcement couldn't have happened at a worse time as the Racing season is up on us along with the War of 1812 Bi-Centennial.
For ourselves at The Old Bank Bistro, we will go on and help those that wish to find a solution for the struggling town that we call home!
In the meantime, see you at The Fort Erie Race Track this summer!
Your host, Peter Koutroulakis.

Bon Appetite *Your host, Peter Koutroulakis*

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41 Jarvis Street • 905-994-9222
www.oldbankbistro.com

Ask the Interior Decorator

Q: WANT TO BRING THE OUTSIDE IN?

A: Spring time - my favourite time of year. A time of re-birth and rejuvenation!

The long days and warm weather leave me wanting to stay outside more, or, bring the outside inside with me. It's a growing trend and, luckily, there are easy ways to accomplish it.

First - open those curtains and clean those windows! Boring, but a clean, clear view enhances what you see out there. If you can, change your curtains. Catch the breeze with something sheer and billowy. Add your favourite new bright colour by changing your pillows up. Create a sitting area just outside the window and blur the lines by using those same pillow colours in plants or outside pillows. Use the colours and fabrics of nature - change your wool carpets to seagrass for the summer. Plants, fresh flowers, or just plain branches. Punch it up by using a colourful vase or painting the branches in the newest trend colour. Don't forget the bedroom - freshen it up with new linens. Switch the flannel for something light and natural - nothing like cotton sheets that have dried outside!

These are just a few ideas. If you want more, please call me, I'd be happy to help you!

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To find out more about how home staging can help you please call me at 289-321-1467 or visit me at www.maxscenesdesign.com

Ask a Funeral Director

Q: Does a Funeral Home offer the same types of service as a Funeral Alternative?

A: Yes, a Funeral Home is licenced to offer all types of funeral services. A funeral alternative is licenced to offer only specific types of services. Many options that a family desire or that make the estate process easier for a family are available only at a Funeral Home. For detailed information, I invite you to call me.

Darren Flagg
Funeral Director

Benner Funeral Services Inc.
Benner Avenue • Fort Erie
905-871-0444

Ask a "Home Improvement Specialist"

Q: I am considering updating my bathroom with a new shower unit. Should I choose polystyrene, ABS, gelcoat fibreglass or acrylic materials for this shower unit?

A: Cost, appearance, durability, repairability and ambient temperatures are key considerations for your choice of materials. Polystyrene and ABS are usually the least expensive materials to use, but are often installed by using a special adhesive to affix them to backing material. If the installation is in a summer home, unheated in the winter, the unit will likely develop cracks over the winter. ABS and polystyrene cannot be buffed to restore the finish. Fibreglass is more costly than either ABS or polystyrene It usually has a gelcoat finish to make it more resilient and increase its lifespan. Once the gelcoat has been worn away, the fibreglass material is exposed and this can detract from its appearance. Acrylic material is usually the most costly, but the vacuum-creation process makes a stronger and more scratch-resistant finish This means an acrylic unit can be buffed, is repairable and will last a much longer time
Take the time to discuss your installation thoroughly with your shower supplier. Good luck with your installation.

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Sat 8.00-5.00 • Sun 9.00-3.00

How do I back up my stuff?

Depends on what it is, and where it is. by Ed Smith

If it's important, make a 2nd copy. If it's SUPER important, make a 3rd! But how? It may be as simple as purchasing an '*External Hard Drive*' or a USB '*Thumb*' Drive. Take care in following directions and **double-checking your backups** afterwards. If possible, get assistance from a computer Technician. They will ensure you're backing up properly.

:-)

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SARAH FERGGUSON Fort Erie Times

Jeremy Soock, a water quality technician from the Town, tests water for lead in a home on Kraft Road.

Town performs annual testing of water

Community lead testing program still looking for volunteers

Sarah Ferguson
The Times

Paul Earl and Jeremy Soock have been reassuring residents that their drinking water is safe for consumption and free of contamination.

Since December of last year, the water technicians have been visiting homes of residents who volunteer to have their water tested for traces of lead.

The sampling is performed as part of the community lead testing program required under the Safe Drinking Water Act passed in 2002.

In previous years, municipalities were only required to conduct a single sampling to test for lead in a town's water system for each recording period.

But the Ontario Safe Drinking Water Act has made recent changes and it requires towns to collect a number of samples for lead testing in two periods, says Earl.

Both municipal and private drinking water samples from homes and businesses along with the town's water distribution system are tested as part of the program.

Samples are taken twice a year between December and April and again between June and October.

"There is a criteria that we follow. That means 60 samples must be taken in term one and another 60 samples in term two. If the results are good, the town is given an exemption and we get a year off from testing."

Earl adds the town's drinking water was tested in 2009 and there wasn't any problems.

"We were back sampling in December 2011 and we got a reduced rate of 30 samples per term because there haven't been any issues with the town's water."

During recent testing, there were two samples taken where small traces of lead were found, but after a retesting of the water, the water was fine.

"That can happen for any number of reasons," says Earl, "Sometimes there might have been an issue at the lab, but so far there haven't been any issues."

The first round of testing will continue until April 15 and any individuals who wish to have their water tested for traces of lead can still volunteer.

A water quality technician will come into a home and the test takes 35 to 45 minutes to complete, says Earl.

"We run the water for five minutes, shut the tap off and the water has to sit for half an hour before we can take a sample of it."

The technician says he hopes everyone who is interested in having their water tested for lead will phone the Town.

"We would like to encourage people to call in and book an appointment and utilize this service the Town has to offer, especially because it's free of charge."

Lead can be caused by anything, from the type of fixtures used in the home to even the age of the house, says Soock.

The Town has a number of qualified water technicians who are willing to answer any questions if residents have an issue with their water.

Soock says many residents may not realize there are people available after hours that can help if it's needed.

"It's unfortunate that people who have rusty or cloudy water and they don't call the Town. Sometimes they will wait a week and we'll go there and do a background check and it was a main break or something we could easily fix."

Soock remembers one occasion where a resident waited a week before he called the Town about the rusty coloured water flowing from the faucets in his home and it turned out to be caused from a main break down the road.

"If he hadn't called us, we might not have found out where the problem was for a long time."

If homeowners have a problem with their water, Soock says they shouldn't wait.

There's always someone there at the Town that can answer a question after hours."

For more information or to volunteer for the community lead testing program phone Earl at 905-871-1600 ext. 2465.

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KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Denise Ball holds a calendar used by her late husband Gary, who marked down his walking schedule everyday, before he passed away last year.

A walk to remember

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

On April 7, Denise Ball wants the community to put on its walking shoes to remember her late husband.

The Stevensville resident lost the love of her life, Gary, last June after contracting C. Difficile while staying at the Greater Niagara General Hospital when he was being treated for a pancreatic attack.

He was admitted to the hospital in early April and was released later that month.

He stayed home for a few weeks before being re-admitted to Welland County General Hospital, after his condition started to take a turn for the worse. While in Welland, he and Denise were told by doctors that he had a 22 -centimetre long pseudocyst on his pancreas and that surgery would be difficult because of him being diagnosed with C. Diff.

He was sent home again, until he collapsed at his home on June 26 and was rushed to hospital by paramedics. The next day, he passed away.

Last Friday, Ball was featured on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's program Marketplace, for a piece on the cleanliness of Ontario's hospitals.

Ball said participating in the show was helpful and will hopefully raise awareness about what some patients have endured under the care of the Niagara Health System.

But she also doesn't want to point fingers and take the route of blaming others for what happened to her husband of ten years. Instead, she is encouraging anyone who knew Gary, a former teacher at Garrison Road Public School, to walk two-kilometres on April 7.

She has chosen this date because last year, it was the last day he went on his daily walk through rural Stevensville.

He marked his calendar with a large 'W' every time he went for a stroll and in a 2011 calendar his wife held onto, it was the last day he checked off his walk.

"He loved walking, it always started his day," said Denise at her home, when meeting with the Times this week.

According to Denise, Gary was very active for a 63-year-old. He played baseball, was an avid ski enthusiast and of course could be seen walking in the area of his Ott Road home on his daily walks.

"He kept himself very healthy," she said.

Denise feels her petitioning the community to walk for Gary is a great cause for two reasons. It will honour her husband and also keep people aware that in her opinion, the health care system still needs work.

"It will keep people aware of what's going on, in his memory at the same time," said Ball.

Although Denise lost her husband during what was declared an infectious outbreak last year, she feels improving health care in Niagara should be focused on a unified remedy and not by slamming the NHS.

"The solution is the fight now," she said.

See Page 21

Want to control your gambling? OLG is working with counsellors to provide the help you may need.

OLG offers a voluntary Self-Exclusion program and works with debt and treatment counsellors across Ontario to ensure our players have access to free and confidential support services.

If you find yourself gambling too often or if it no longer feels like a game, OLG's voluntary Self-Exclusion program can be an important first step. By entering the program, you commit to stay away from all OLG slots and casino facilities in Ontario. To complement the program, we work with independent problem gambling and debt management experts to ensure you have access to the right support and tools to get the help you need. When you enroll in the voluntary Self-Exclusion program, you are offered the option to have an independent counsellor present. In fact, you can even sign up for the program at a participating problem gambling or debt counsellor's office. That way, you're guaranteed immediate, confidential support from trained professionals.

For more information about OLG's voluntary Self-Exclusion program, visit **KnowYourLimit.ca.**

In the Fort Erie area, to reach a problem gambling counsellor and to inquire about registering for the Self-Exclusion program, OLG encourages you to contact:

Community Addiction Services of Niagara

Community Addiction Services of Niagara
60 James St., Suite 401
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7E7
(905) 684-1859

Know your limit Play within it

knowyourlimit.ca

olg.ca OLG

Popular paint projects for spring

(NC)—Like any home décor trend, painting trends come and go. From sponge and stenciling to accent walls and painted chalkboards, new innovations have paved the way for exciting developments. If you are looking to give your home a quick pick me up, nothing is faster, easier and less expensive than a fresh coat of paint. According to The Home Depot Canada, here are some of the most popular painting projects and solutions for spring.

Paint the unexpected: Traditionally, colour has been reserved for the walls only. This spring, consider introducing paint to everything from worn wood furniture and floor boards to the ceiling. Whether you apply a muted tone, bright hue or a dynamic check pattern, you will be amazed at the results.

Paint and go: Paint technology has come a long way in saving time. Whether one room or the whole house is on the spring checklist, make any paint project easier with a premium paint and primer all in one. Available in a wide range of colours, Behr Premium Plus has received rave reviews.

Colour match it: Sometimes inspiration is found from that perfect colour in a piece of art or even a throw pillow. Now you can bring in a home accessory or fabric swatch to the Colour Solutions Center at The Home Depot and an associate will replicate the colour in a can of paint. Imagine the possibilities.

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Fight the flood: *Keep your property afloat*

(NC)— Springtime is here, but as spring showers pour, Canadians are at risk for more damage than rained-out picnics—we're also at risk for property flooding. Water damage to property can be expensive and frustrating, harming not only the home, but also possessions and the wellbeing of the people inside. "This time of year results in an increased number water-related claims," states Wayne Ross, insurance expert at Aviva Canada. "And as homeowners are investing much more in their basements these days, it is important to take proactive steps to minimize the risk." Here are some tips for homeowners to keep their properties above water:

• *Inspect your roof:* To prevent leaks, get the roof inspected every few years to check the condition of the shingles. Clear out gutters to prevent blockages.

• *Install a backwater valve:* These valves close automatically if the sewer backs-up and can prevent thousands of dollars in damage.

• *Scope out your sump pump:* If your basement has one, examine it and do a test run if it doesn't get used frequently.

• *Check your foundation:* This is especially important as the ice melts. If you notice water pooling, find a way to lead the liquid away from your home.

• *Start right:* If you are finishing your basement, make sure to seal your exterior walls.

• *Examine your insurance:* While overland flooding is generally not covered by insurance, you can add additional coverage, including protection from sewage backup.

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Warm up check up: don't forget your AC!

(NC)—There's a lot to feel good about with the transition from winter to spring; nature in bloom, lighter jackets, and shutting off your home's heating source once and for all. Soon the sun's rays will be all you need to warm your home but they'll also heat your home to unbearable temperatures when summer gets into full swing.

Spring is just one step away from summer. Don't wait until then to find out your air conditioner isn't functioning properly and suffer the consequences of being overheated. Sears Home Services has a few tips you can do yourself to ensure your home's A/C is fully prepared for the warmer weather.

- Once the snow is gone for good, remove your outdoor unit cover and let the warm weather dry out any winter condensation.
- Be sure there is nothing blocking the flow of air around your unit. This means you may have to trim back any bushes or tall grasses so there is at least three to six inches of clearance around the unit.
- Give the unit a good spray with your garden hose to clean off dust and debris accumulated through the fall and winter.

If you're unsure about preparing you A/C yourself, contact Sears Home Services who can ensure that your system will be ready to run efficiently and will keep you cool all summer long.

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ANOTHER BORING INSECT
Amy Brant of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority explains the dangers of the Emerald Ash Borer, and what we can do to prevent the spread of this threat to our trees. A joint presentation of the Library and the Bert Miller Nature Club. WEONESOAY, APRIL 11, 7 PM, CENTENNIAL. FREE.

BABY TIMES
Early Literacy activities, games and stories for babies from birth to 1B months $3 for a 4 week program
Mondays beginning April 16 @ 10:30 am at Crystal Ridge Branch

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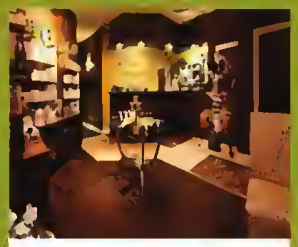

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Dr. Virapen practised in several European countries (Ireland, England, Germany), South America, Canada and the USA. His last appointment in the USA was director of emergency department and trauma centre in Buffalo, New York, after which Dr. Virapen returned to reside in Ontario, where he has been practising over the last 20 years.

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Local stylist one of 20 in Canada chosen for competition

KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Vince Salvatori, owner of Fate Salon, works on a client at his Jarvis Street location. On Sunday, he will be in a national competition taking place in Toronto.

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

A local business owner is taking his style to a national competition.

Vince Salvatori, owner of Fate Salon on Jarvis Street, is one of 20 stylists across Canada to be chosen for the Ordinary to Extraordinary competition, hosted by City TV and the Allied Beauty Association (ABA).

This Sunday, Salvatori and one his makeup artists Nicole Foster will hit the stage in front of what he expects to be thousands of people in a live audience at the Toronto Convention Centre. They will be given a 45-minute timeframe to work with, completing a makeover on a model they have no previous knowledge of.

How they get to work will depend on mostly facial structure and personality.

"We have no idea what the models look like," said Salvatori.

Earlier this year, he found out about the competition and decided to submit the required brief biography and profile about his career to see what kind of response he would receive.

Low and behold, he made the cut.

> **"It's fantastic that I was even selected."**
>
> *— Vince Salvatori*

"It's fantastic that I was even selected," he said.

Salvatori is used to taking his craft outside of his local business, as a stylist for many photo shoots published in international magazines, but this is the first time he will be put to work on a stage with an entire convention centre full of industry big-wigs watching.

He looks forward to the pressure, he said.

What makes this extra special for the stylist, is that he hopes to carry on his father's name with all of his accomplishments in the trade of hair styling.

Vince's father Reno opened his salon on Jarvis Street in 1967 and conducted business there until his passing in 2008.

In 2004, the establishment changed its name to Fate Salon, from Reno's Salon.

He and his father were extremely close and shared a bond by working with each other for many years. Salvatori hopes he can fare well in the upcoming competition, to thank his father for all his love and support.

"Continuing his legacy is tremendously important to me," he said.

The local stylist hopes to fare well in the competition not only as his own personal triumph, but as a representative of Fort Erie on a national and televised scale.

Salvatori has also welcomed many college and high school apprentices to come into his business and work toward completing their education, which is something he loves to do and will continue to offer for as long as he is in business.

"It's all about giving back to the community," he said.

Man tasered and robbed at gunpoint on Sunday

Police are on the hunt for three suspects after a man was tasered and robbed at gunpoint Sunday night.

A man was sitting in his vehicle at the Fort Erie Public Library around 8:20 p.m. when he was approached by three males who demanded his wallet, electronics and cigarettes, Niagara Regional Police said.

The suspects pointed a knife and handgun at the victim, who refused to comply. He was tasered in the arm and hit in the head with an object, police said.

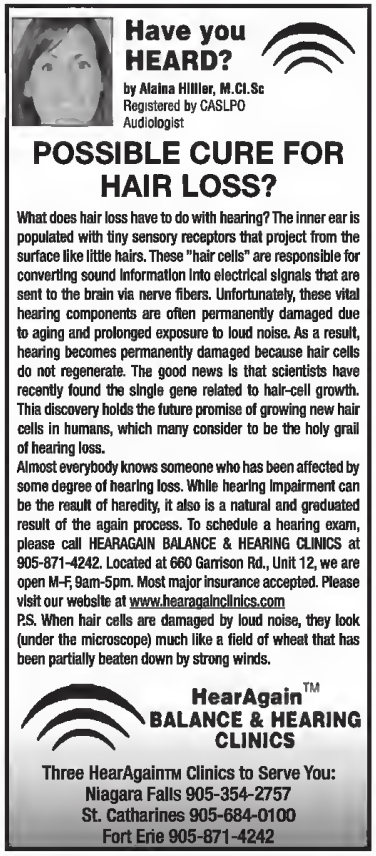
The suspects stole the man's cigarettes and fled the scene on foot.

The victim made it to a nearby residence to call for help. He was treated for minor injuries at hospital.

The first suspect is described as a white male with a thin build between six- and six-foot-three wearing black clothing. The second suspect is a male who was wearing a light blue sweatshirt. The third suspect is a male with a dark complexion, 15-16 years old with dark medium-length curly hair and approximately 120-130 pounds wearing a black hooded sweatshirt.

On Friday, police issued a press release, saying that a 16-year-old Fort Erie male has been charged. Two other males from Toronto have been identified as suspects but have not yet been apprehended.

Police ask anyone with information to call the criminal investigations branch at 905-688-4111 ext. 2300 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.



High school students cruise toward a better education

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

Students at Fort Erie Secondary School are cruising toward learning more about their potential careers.

During March Break, several students involved in the high skills major hospitality and tourism program at the local high school, took a Caribbean cruise to learn more about the industry they have been studying.

Students and teachers held a handful of fundraisers to support the trip before they set sail and it was deemed a success.

Now, the students and FESS staff want to share their story about how successful of a voyage it was.

The first stop was in Miami, where students and teachers were given local history lessons before heading to St. Thomas in the U.S Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, the Turks and Caicos and the Bahamas.

Connie Engels, head of the school's co-operative education program, said the overall attitude she saw from the students was that they were enjoying a March Break vacation, but taking information home with them that they couldn't obtain anywhere else.

"They were learning, while on a trip that was so enjoyable for them," said Engels.

When the students arrived at the Virgin Islands, representatives from the Hotel and Tourism Association greeted them and embraced their interest in the industry with open arms, Engels said.

"They were welcomed to the island like they were royalty."

> **"These are the experiences the kids will keep with them forever."**
>
> *— Afshin Keyvani*

The trip was also provided an educational experience for the students, outside of learning about ethnic cuisine and what it takes to serve an entire cruise ship full of hungry guests. They visited the rainforest, were given lessons on geography and had many glimpses of cultures they have never been exposed to.

"It was totally cross-curricular," said Engels.

Afshin Keyvani is the program's teacher and he agreed that it was a wonderful opportunity for the students and staff that took the adventure.

"These are the experiences the kids will keep with them forever," said Keyvani.

Kelly Plato is a grade 12 student enrolled in the program at FESS. She aspires to be a world-class pastry chef and was given the opportunity to work closely with many chefs along the way who were eager to share their expertise with her.

She is always willing to learn and try new things which is exactly what she did. But at the same time, it was a fun-filled vacation with her friends.

"It was all centred around school, but at the same time it was like we weren't at school," she said.

"This is something that's going to help me with my career."

Samantha Renshaw, a grade 11 student, said working with the many culinary experts who made their trip so educational was a great experience and that it will be helpful when deciding where she wants to take her life after high school.

"These are people we can look up to and we learned a lot about what else we can do to pursue our careers," she said.

In other news, FESS students in the program also participated in a high skills major competition at Niagara College. Seven students took home medals, but Engels and Keyvani wished to hold off on the details until the students receive their hard ware next week.

Staff and students from Fort Erie Secondary School took the Fort Erie Times with them to Nassau, Bahamas during a trip taken on March Break.

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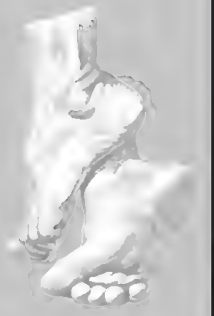

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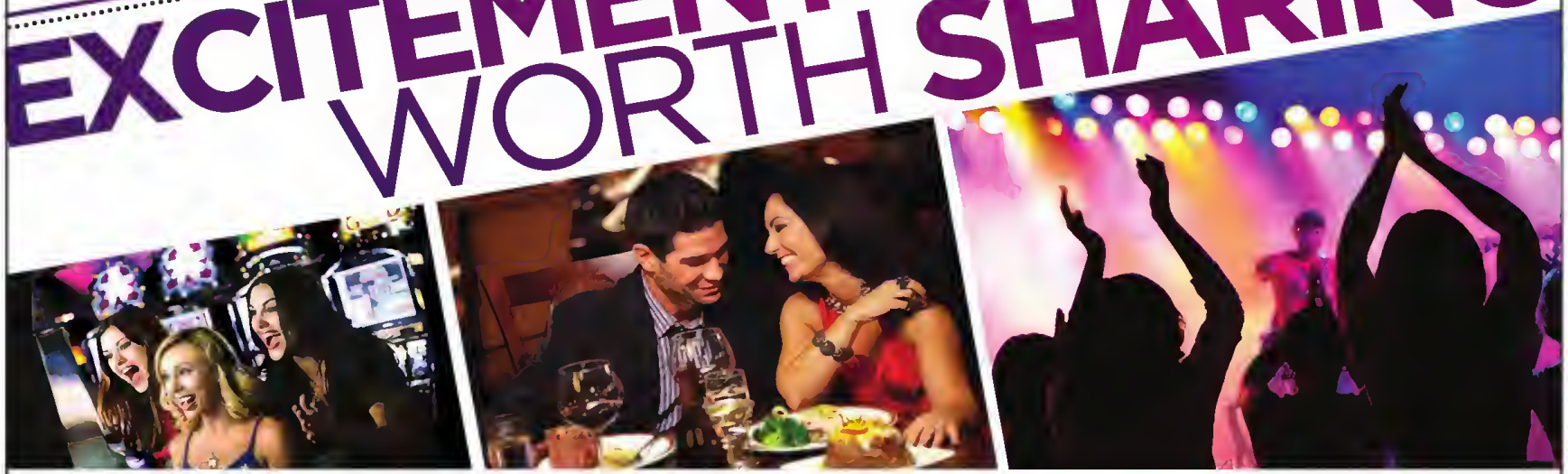

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Chamber president finishing his second term next month

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

Stephen Passero is taking off one of his hats on April 19.

The Ward 1 councillor, past-president of the Ontario Shorewalk Association and board member for the Adult Literacy Council, will be turning over his role as the Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce's president at its annual general meeting next month.

> **"There were a lot of things we were working on as a collective the first year of my presidency, we finally got to see come to fruition in year two."**
>
> *— Stephen Passero*

He will be completing his second term in that position when a new president is sworn in at the Buffalo Canoe Club.

Sitting in for a second year is something Passero is glad he did, because it allowed for completion of things started earlier in his tenure.

"There were a lot of things we were working on as a collective the first year of my presidency we finally got to see come to fruition in year two," he said.

Passero is also very grateful for the time he spent working with the chamber's board of directors, who he says are great people to share ideas and find solutions with.

"I've been very privileged to sit around the table with those individuals. This really has been a team effort," said Passero.

Currently there are 415 local businesses registered with the chamber, which he says is a remarkable figure compared to other communities similar in size to Fort Erie. This number continues to grow, putting the mark

Stephen Passero

well past 50 per cent.

"That's a testament not just to thes strength of the chamber itself and the directives we've taken, but a testament to our membership."

Passero described the chamber as an outlet for businesses of all sizes to find navigation around obstacles, networking opportunities and strong relationships in the community.

"We pride ourselves on being the voice of business," he said.

Business After Five is a monthly networking opportunity that the chamber offers its members, with a different business opening its doors for the event each time. Passero says these are the types of things that are appreciated.

"We've really taken them to the next level," he said.

Discussing the overall economic climate of Greater Fort Erie, the outgoing chamber president says the attitude that this is a "sleepy little town" needs to be overcome.

Growth, jobs and development have never been needed more, in his opinion.

"If you don't think it can be done, get out of the way of the people who are doing it."

The Canadian Motor Speedway is a project Passero is heavily supported by the chamber... among several others.

But he feels the town is definitely in need of the multi-million dollar project.

"I believe it will benefit sectors in ways we are not even aware of yet."

Concert series features local bands at this year's Friendship Festival

Sarah Ferguson
The Times

Although the Fort Erie Friendship Festival is still three months away, festival organizers are working hard to put together a spectacular concert line-up.

Those who attend this year may notice a different tone in the festival because organizers are going for a more "grass roots feel," says Flo Odding, manager of the Friendship Festival.

The usual festival concert series is scheduled for June 29 to July 2 and it features a list of local talent.

"About 90 per cent of the bands are from this area and a few bands are from the US."

There are a few reasons why this year's concert series is a little more low-key than usual.

Instead of opting for one headlining band, Odding says the festival is hoping to highlight the local music scene.

"We're hoping to get as many people from the community involved."

Odding says the festival's concert series will have a more family friendly feel because there is more daytime programming available and wiith a wide variety of local bands to enjoy, there is lots of free entertainment.

This year, concert-goers will also be allowed to bring their lawn chairs to night-time concerts to make it easier and more enjoyable for families to listen to music.

With about 40 hours of music planned during the four-day concert series, Odding says there is "more entertainment than ever with something for everyone."

Katlina and the Gracious, the RK Walker Band, Max Hillier and Gatorbait with special guest Ann Singer and Pappy Johns Band will perform on June 29.

Non-Fiction, Common Ground, Vibonics, Sad Guru, One Year Later, Aura June, Breaching Vista, UndertheInfluence and Street Pharmacy will perform on June 30.

The Greg Sykes Band will perform on July 1 with Andrew Thompson, Last Chapter and the Great Bloomers kicking off the Canada Day Fireworks.

Finishing the concert series, Chelsea Crites, Campx, Weekend Riot Club, Hello Kelly and Newworldson will perform on July 2.

Odding says organizers are still adding to the line-up and there are lots of exciting events planned including activities and events inspired by the 1812 bicentennial celebrations and "a couple surprises" that people won't be expecting at this year's festival.

Yellow Shirts support memorial walk

From Page 12

Joy Russell, a highly active member of the Yellow Shirt Brigade, a group of citizens who have been fighting for accessibility to accessible health care ever since the NHS introduced its hospital improvement plan, was also at Ball's home to show support for the walk on April 7.

Russell said the initiative that Ball has taken to honour her husband is not an event organized by the Yellow Shirts, but merely something that they want to encourage.

"We're just here to show support, it's all about Gary," said Russell.

Earlier this week, the NHS's appointed supervisor Kevin Smith announced that its contract with the company responsible for cleaning its hospitals had been terminated.

In a short statement Tuesday, the NHS said its agreement with Aramark will expire at the end of March. While the cleaning crews were NHS staff, the director of the services worked for Aramark.

"Please note that this is the only position in the NHS housekeeping services that is currently or has been contracted out. We have determined, at this time, we will move this position back into NHS," said the statement. "We have spent over $3.5 million extra this year to fight hospital-acquired infections in our hospitals. We will be adding the equivalent of 18 new full-time cleaning positions."

Smith said the decision will help ensure that the hospitals are scrubbed comprehensively. And he said the move will put cleanliness solidly at the core of what NHS staff do.

"Obviously what's important for us is cleaning and housekeeping in terms of a clinical mission, not as much of the hotel mission," he said.

"It wasn't so much that we were unhappy with the service," he said, as that the system preferred "internal expertise."

The choice of using Aramark was often attacked by the Service Employees International Union, which represents cleaning staff at the NHS.

"Aramark is in the business to make money," said Sharleen Stewart, president of the union. "They are in it to make a profit and the way you make more profit is to cut costs."

Stewart, who remains critical of NHS cleaning policies, said insufficient cleaning allows the spread of superbugs like C. difficile.

The NHS had to deal with a C. difficile outbreak last year at its three major hospitals, in St. Catharines, Welland and Niagara Falls, and drastically revised its cleaning protocols because of it.

Stewart said she hopes that with cleaning services under direct control of a taxpayer-funded hospital system that improvements will continue to be made to protect patients.

The NHS statement did not say why the contract with Aramark was not renewed.

-with files from QMI Agency

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Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks has a steady flow of projects to work on

The Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks (FOFEC) have many reasons to smile.

Recently, the group along with the Town of Fort Erie and the University of Guelph have received a $65,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The money will be spent on a joint collaborative effort that involves the Town of Fort Erie and the University of Guelph. The funds from the grant will be used to study species at risk and analyze data collected to measure the success of the restoration and construction work in the Beaver Creek drainage area. And in order to do this, a Masters student will be hired to help with the work, a quality metre will be purchased and funds will be used to hire summer students.

The local environmental group is also getting ready for its annual Walk for Earth Day and Eco Fair, which will be held at Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School on Friday, April 20 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the high school's cafeteria.

The event is also being hosted in partnership with the Bert Miller Nature Club and the Fort Erie Conservation Club.

Since its inception in 1989, FOFEC has achieved much success in the field taking on major projects such as Frenchman's Creek and more recently, Beaver Creek. A key factor in its success has been the summer works and student programs.

"Our volunteers and staff work closely with our local schools promoting awareness and educating our community youth on issues related to the health of our waterscape," said FOFEC president Frank Genze.

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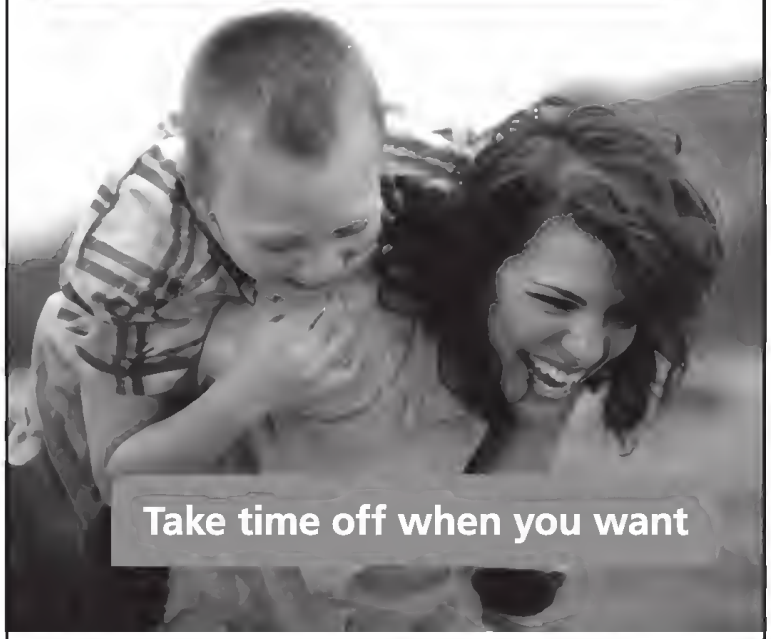

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Service club donates

Recently, Jeff Eggleton, Bruce Warren and Joe Gobel from the Fort Erie Lions Club dropped by Community Outreach Program Erie (COPE) to make a donation of several food items. The local food bank is located at 32 Dufferin Street and the phone number there is (905) 871-2526. Donations are always needed.

KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School student Sam Conhiser practices his discus techniques during practice at Pride Field on Thursday.

KRIS DUBÉ Fort Erie Times

Mitch Vail, a grade 10 student at Crystal Beach High School, practices his skills in javelin on Thursday.

Blue Devils get ready for Spring sports

Spring has arrived and athletes at Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School (RCBHS) are getting ready for a fresh season.

With sports like hockey, volleyball and basketball wrapping up earlier this year, the RCBHS Blue Devils are in the middle of putting together rosters for its track, soccer and badminton teams.

At practice and tryouts on Thursday, the high school's physical education department head Brent Mergl said it's important to promote a variety of sports that many of the students may not have paid attention to in the past.

"We're just encouraging them to get involved," he said.

Last year, the RCBHS Blue Devils track team earned the most points in its zone and were named Southern Ontario Secondary School Association (SOSSA) champions for the sixth year in a row.

Mergl says the team's performance is usually the result of a few athletes excelling in an event they are learning at the same time.

"That's kind of where we find the diamond in the rough," he said.

But what makes it easier on a lot of the students, is that they all mostly have the same knowledge of track and field at the start of the season.

"A lot of them start at the same level," he said.

But like any other sport, if they are a natural athlete... performance will be a result of that.

"With a good technique and an athletic background, you can get a lot further."

Last year, 14 Blue Devils competed in the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association's competition.

The boys soccer team came second at SOSSA and the girls soccer team lost in a shootout in zone finals.

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Miscellaneous A230

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Deaths

GILBERT, John Charles - Peacefully at the Douglas Memorial Hospital on Monday Merch 26th, 2012 in his 52 yeer. Beloved husband and best friend of Debbie Baer-Gilbert. Cherished father of John (JJ) Gilbert, Robert (Jim) Gilbert, Brittany Schooley and Bronson Gilbert. Loving grandfether of Delileh Domer-Gilbert. Sedly missed by his sisters Pat Simons and Elaine Spurek. Predeceased by his parents Jim and Nellie Gilbert. John was a member of the CMC Bikers and the Royal Canadian Legion. **BENNER FUNERAL SERVICES** 1105 Benner Ave Fort Erie entrusted with arrangements. Cremation has taken plece. Friends will be received on Saturday March 31st, 2012 from 11am till time of Memorial Service et 1PM in the Benner Chepel. Donations to the Canadian Cancer Society would be appreciated by the family, cerds available at the funeral home

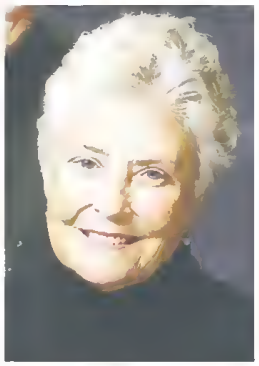
12542982

Time takes away the edge of grief,
But memory turns back every leaf.

Memoriam Verse #39
To remember e loved one with this verse
Call 1-866-541-6757 Today

11284467

Deaths



EGLOFF, Jane Ruth - died March 22, 2012, supported by her loving wife, Dana Harvey, and surrounded by her family and friends. She hed been in declining heelth after a stroke in 2006 and, more recently, a fall late last year. She is missed by her sons, Liam Murphy (Susan Hess) and Owen Murphy (Alicia), and her daughter, Jessica Murphy (Vincent Seccomendo); her stepson Damon Harvey (Dolores) and stepdaughter Jill Marie Harvey (James Garrison); her grandchildren, Thomas, Emily, Ian, Shannon; stepgrandchildren, Lukis and Sienna; meny beloved nieces, nephews, grendnieces, grandnephews; and many dear friends. Jane was born February 9, 1941 in West Hempstead, Long Island, coming to Buffalo to attend D'Youville College. Over her life, Jene teught meny people to live end love. She was the consummate teacher, teaching her own children and many others a love of leaming, family and life. In nearly forty years as a librarian, she helped found Buffelo's first elementary school bilinguel library and stocked books in over 40 languages at Grover Cleveland High School. She was deeply enriched by helping all students, even overlooked learners, become life-long leerners. Jene was e strong, spirit-filled and joyful woman. Her dinners were legendary; the stories of fun and fellowship at her table left all who knew her with delicious memories. She read anything and everything, reed (end wrote) poetry with e pession, and loved to be "dressed to the nines" (in purple when possible). Arrangements entrusted to **BENNER FUNERAL SERVICES**, Fort Erie, Ontario. Jane's family will be receiving friends et the Orchard Perk Friends (Quaker) Meeting House, 6924 East Quaker Street (US Rte 20A), Orcherd Park, New York starting at 3 pm on March 31, 2012. Jane's life will be celebrated at a memorial service in the tradition of Friends also at the Orchard Park Friends Meeting House starting et 5 p.m. While Jene enjoyed flowers, she loved helping people, so the family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Buffalo Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14222, or to the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, 1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo, New York 14203.

12539342

To have them here in the same old way,
Would be our greatest wish today.

Memoriam Verse #43
To remember a loved one with this verse
Call 1-866-541-6757 Today

11284493

Deaths

HAUN, Ross - Passed away peacefully at home, with his family by side, on Saturday March 24th, 2012 at the age of 81 years. Ross Heun, loving husbend of Gerry for 57 years. Beloved father of John (Dawn) and Cindy (Paul) Anton. Cherished grandfather of Becky, Sarah, Paul, Russell, Chris and Ian and great grandfather to seven. Dear brother to Doris Pirson end predeceesed by parents Ed and Blanche, brothers Ozzie and Doug and sisters Vi end Pearl. Survived by many nieces and nephews. Visitation for Ross will be held at **THE WILLIAMS FUNERAL HOME**, 722 Ridge Road N, Ridgeway on Thursday from 2-4 and 7-9 pm. A service to celebrate his life will be held in the chapel on Friday morning at 11 o'clock. Interment will follow at Ridgeway Memoriel Cemetery. In memory of Ross, memorial contributions would be epprecieted to the Canedien Cencer Society. A special thank you to Nurse Elizabeth and Tracy. On line guest register www.williemsfuneralhome.ce

12539442

JAMIESON - Norman A. "Froggy" Of Buffelo, entered into rest Februery 29, 2012. Beloved husband of the late Ruby (nee Chrysler) Jamieson; devoted father of Rochelle R. Johns(Shelly); David J. Jamieson, Karen Stewert, William Jemieson(Billie), Dennis Chrysler, Mark Jemieson; cherished grandfather of ten grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; loving son of the late Norman and Eva Jamieson; deer brother of the lete Audrey Andolino end the late Doris Frank; eleo survived by femily end many friends Mr. Jamieson was anArmyveteran of WW II and a 60 year member of Iron Workers Local 6, Buffelo. We miss you deddy, Love Shelly, Stephen end Wynter.

12544323

JOHNSTON, Sandra G. - At Wellend County General Hospital on Friday, March 23, 2012, Sandra, partner of Cathy Mugridge, dear sister of Bonnie, Debbie and Dave, also survived by 5 nieces and nephews. Sandra will be missed by family and friends. A special thanks to Joan and Peter for their continued kindness. At Sandra's request cremation has taken place. A private service will be held at a later date. "Now you are with your little blue butterflies." I love you Cathy. Arrangements entrusted to **NIAGARA FUNERAL ALTERNATIVES**, (905)894-0120.

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Deaths

HODDER, Sarah (nee Greeley) - Peecefully et the Greater Niegere General Hospital, Niagara Falls on Tuesday, March 13th, 2012 in her 95th year. Beloved wife of the late Gordon Matthew Hodder (1994) Daughter of the late William J. and Emma Greeley. Dear sister of the late Shirley Quirion (1981). Dear cousin of Ed (deceased) and Audrey Tucker and their children Penny Belton and Ainsley Tucker, cousins Barbara Kyper, Gillian Zendjais, Edna Spurrell and Fanny Tucker. Deer sister-in-law of Bertha and Gerald King, Albert end Susan Hodder end the late Margaret and Norman Kane. Dear aunt of Sherri King, Gina Hodder, Jeffrey Hodder, Michelle Hodder, Jacklyn Hodder, Gordon (late) and Barbara Kane, Dorothy Thistle, Glynn end Vicki King, Christine and Pet Fleming, Sandra Kennedy, Linda and Tony Smith, Maureen Quirion, Milford end Peggy Quirion and Ronnie Quirion. Special friend of the Newell Family and Barry Wakely. Sareh was born in Portugal Cove, Newfoundland and came to Ontario following the Second World War. She was an active member of St. Paul's Anglican Church and The Douglas Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, Fort Erie. Visitation was held at the **HAMMOND-DAVIDSON FUNERAL HOME,** 21 Wintemute Street Fort Erie on Tuesday 7 - 9 p.m. Funeral Service was Wednesday, March 21st et St. Paul's Anglican Church, 32 Idylewylde Place, Fort Erie at 1:00 p.m.with the Rev. Mark Gladding officiating. (Visitation et Church from 12:00 Noon) Interment at St. Paul's Anglicen Church Cemetery. If so desired donations to St. Paul's Anglican Church would be appreciated. On-line condolences hammonddavidsonfuneralhome.com

12541297

Deaths

PEREIRA, Albino - Passed away suddenly at his residence in Sherkston on Wednesday March 28th, 2012. Loving husband of Maria. Proud father of Albino (Lyne), Daniel (Jemie), Nelson (Lynn) Lionel (Cynthia), and Linda (Stuart) Bolton. Loving Papa of Sebastien, Ashley, Jordan, Adriane, Nathan, Darren, Christian, Cole, Cory, Brianna, Jesse, Nikki, Abby and Matthew. Also survived by his brother Manuel (Augusta). Predeceased by 2 brothers and 2 sisters. His passion for sports, especially the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Toronto Blue Jays was eclipsed only by his love and devotion for his family. Albino and Maria constantly watched and supported their children and grandchildren as they pursued their dreams. A hobby farmer and jack of all trades, he was a long-time employee of Robin Hood Flour Mills, Albino will be fondly remembered by his fellow members of Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church. **BENNER FUNERAL SERVICES,** 1105 Benner Ave. Fort Erie entrusted with arrangements. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Fridey from 1-3 & 6-9. Funeral Services will be held in the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church (elso known es Trinity Life Church) 5348 Sherkston Road Sherkston, Ontario on Saturday March 31st, 11 o'clock. Interment to follow in the churchyard. If so desired, donations to the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family.

12543323

To have them here in the same old way,
Would be our greatest wish today.

Memoriam Verse #43
To remember a loved one with this verse
Call 1-866-541-6757 Today

11284493

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Our commitment to service is reflected, not only in our name, but through personally answering the phone after hours, arranging pre and post funeral needs and constant education with respect to family needs and concerns.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have with respect to service options available through Benner Funeral Services.

Deaths

SPECIALNY, Bill (William) Harold - Suddenly at home Monday, Feb. 13, 2012 in his 64th year. Survived by brothers Paul, Tim, sister Sherry, nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his soulmate Carol Jean (Trotta), parents - Harold and Molly, brother Brian, Kerry and his best friend Rick. Cremation has taken place. Greveside service Monday, April 2nd at 1 p.m. at Overholt Cemetery, 3rd Concession Rd., Port Colborne

12541327

In memoriam

IN LOVING MEMORY

JEFFERY *"Hearnzy"* HEARN

To live in the hearts
of the ones you left behind,
is not to die
For you live with us each end every day.
A true friend, a family man.
We will never forget you.

Love always and forever,
Herbie, Shannon & Scoots

12542630

In loving memory of
Jeffery Vincent Hearn
December 12, 1968 - April 2, 2011
A yeer ago our family was broken yet again.
Although 40 years apart the pain is numbing.
We continue to listen for the front door to
swing open, followed by a burst of
"Ma, whatcha' doing?"
There is an empty seet in the Newsroom
but channel 28 still says "Jeff's".
There is not a day, not a minute
nor a moment that you are not thought of.
Knowing you are catching up with Dad
comforts us.
May God appreciate your huge smile and
your witty sense of humour,
Protect your generous heart and
Bless your sweet soul.
With All Our Love,
Mom, Mary Jane, Meaghan,
Meaghan, Aaron,
Delaney, Reaghan and Myley

12542139

In memoriam

In loving memory of
Jerome Zizzo
Ten years,
always in our hearts
end forever on our minds.
Mom and Russ

12542885

In loving memory of
W. Don Stevenson
February 1959 - April 2011
Time does not heal ell wounds.
There is a token of affection
and heartache that I feel every day.
Rest in peece - Dad

12531164

JEFF ALLEN
September 5, 1971 - March 30, 2011

Your life was a blessing,
Your memory a treasure.
You are loved beyond words,
And missed beyond measure.

Mom and Dad

12539639

Kenneth "Ike" Sparling
April 5, 2008
Those we love don't go away
They walk, beside us everyday
Unseen, unheard, but always near
Still loved, still missed end very deer.
All our love
Pat, MaryPat, Terri, Brian, Steve, Stephanie,
Joe, Mike, Mindy, Micaela, Jake and Rya.

12544344

Hockey game between two nations hitting the ice next Saturday

Kris Dubé
Fort Erie Times

Living in a border town, many local residents are fully-aware of the friendly rivalry Canadians and Americans have when it comes to hockey.

On April 7 at 7 p.m. at the Leisureplex, a match between the two nations will be hosted by the War of 1812 bicentennial planning committee.

John Johnston, project co-ordinator for the celebration of 150 years of peace said the game is designed to be an exciting event that will be fun for the whole family.

Children who decide to sport Canada or U.S. apparel will be admitted for free, both national anthems will be performed by a singer from Chorus Niagara, a brief performance from the Dominion Repertoiry Theatre will be held before the game... and much more will be a part of the night.

Mayor Doug Martin and the mayor of Buffalo, Byron Brown, will be a part of a ceremonial face-off before the game starts.

Johnston said players on both teams are from the college and Jr. B levels.

"It's going to be a huge event," he said.

He feels the game will be a symbol of the relationship between both countries and the love for hockey that both have... especially in this area.

"We used to fight, now we play hockey."

The planning committee is also getting ready for its second theatre production, scheduled to take place in October. For more information about the committee and its efforts, visit www.forterie1812.ca.

SARAH FERGUSON Fort Erie Times

Skaters from the Crystal Ridge Skating Club are celebrating because they have been honoured with awards. The skating club recently competed in two competitions and performed well overall.

Skating club wins top titles at invitational

The Crystal Ridge Skating Club competed in the Buffalo State Niagara Invitational last weekend and took fourth place overall.

Brittney Hebbourn won first place in the showcase free skate level D.

Ashley Joyce took first for her fox trot and she won second place in showcase free skate level D.

Natalie Mountain took first place in showcase free skate level B and second place in jumps preliminary B.

Karli Flake won second place in basic skills six A, third place in beginner free skate track B, fourth for her Dutch waltz and fifth place in jumps beginner B.

Danielle Cross took third place in showcase free skate level B.

Ashley Backshall won first place in pre-preliminary skate level B and fourth in jumps pre-preliminary B.

Chloe Scott won first place in beginner free skate track A, third for her Dutch waltz and basic skills and fifth place in jumps beginner A.

Morgan Boothby won third place in jumps preliminary A and fifth place in preliminary free skate.

William Porter took home third place in the free skate boys category.

Shelby Burnison won fourth place in both beginner free skate A and compulsory moves beginner.

Skye Martin won fourth place in basic skills four and she took fifth place in beginner free skate B, jumps beginner C, basic skills four and she finished fifth for her Dutch waltz.

Corrina Renshaw won fourth place in jumps pre-preliminary A and she won fifth place in pre-preliminary free skate A.

Madeline Marck-Sherk won fourth place in pre-preliminary free skate B.

Diannah Hindrea won fourth place in showcase free skate level B.

Mackenzie Martin took second place in basic skills four and fourth place in jumps beginner D.

Monica Dempsie won fifth place in beginner free skate C.

The skating club also competed in the Futures competition in Simcoe.

Backshall won third in the pre-preliminary free skate B and Burnison placed in the top ten in beginner free skate.

Sara Sanabria took fifth place in the 13 and under free skate.

The skating club is hosting a Beach Day Carnival at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre today from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m.

Members of the skating club, including pre-school and adult skaters will perform a selection of their routines on the ice.

There will also be a few beach inspired games and activities for the family to enjoy.

The public is invited to attend and learn more about the Crystal Ridge Skating Club.

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